



NEWS RELEASE

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 7, 1994

TROOP WITHDRAWAL PLANS SET

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John M. Shalikasvili, USA, announced today that many of the troops assigned to Operation Maintain Democracy in Haiti and Operation Vigilant Warrior in the Persian Gulf region would be returning to their bases in the next few weeks.

"The U.S. forces that deployed in support of both operations can be justifiably proud of the success of their respective missions. Their presence in both areas was instrumental in maintaining peace and preventing the outbreak of further conflict," Secretary Perry stated.

In Haiti, a reduction of approximately 6,000 people will be completed by about December 1. These reductions are made possible by the successful completion of the respective missions that those troops performed. Specifically, as construction projects are completed, engineering assets will be redeployed. As civilian contractors assume support responsibilities, combat service support personnel will redeploy. Also, as additional multinational forces begin operating and the Haitian Interim Police Security Force begins working, military police and infantry personnel will be able to come home. Finally, as the total number of U.S. ground forces decreases, headquarters personnel will be redeployed. Approximately 9,000 U.S. personnel will remain in support of the operation after December 1.

"The drawdown of forces in Haiti is linked to mission accomplishment, not to artificial timetables," Secretary Perry said. "We will continue to assess the progress of Operation Maintain Democracy. As missions are accomplished and objectives are met, additional redeployments will be scheduled."

In the Persian Gulf region, Operation Vigilant Warrior has been successful in deterring further Iraqi aggression. The threat to the security and stability of the region remains, however. U.S. forces must therefore remain in the region to help enforce U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

Overall, the U.S. presence, which has peaked at approximately 29,000 personnel, will now be decreased. As previously announced, more than 7,000 of the ground forces now in the region will be home before Christmas. Ground forces will periodically return to the region for exercises involving the prepositioned equipment.

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Navy and Marine Corps assets will return to the levels that existed prior to the latest crisis. That means that at any given time, a carrier battle group, an amphibious ready group (with embarked Marines) and/or other naval units will be operating in the region.

A number of aircraft will also remain in the region to continue enforcement of the no-fly zone in southern Iraq. That number of aircraft, which peaked at the current level of approximately 270, will be reduced, but will be substantially higher than the pre-crisis levels, reflecting the addition of a more robust air to ground capability.

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